1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

776 coals, which enables human beings to locate the epos in the night time. There is little evidence to show that in the Barama country the epos are associated with natural species or features of the environment in the same way in which, for instance, the tree spirits are. They seem to be free spirits of the bush, bent for the most part upon mischief. And from the point of view of holiness, they seem to occupy the lowest rank in the order of Carib supernatural beings. They alone can be seen and conversed with by laymen, and their nearness to ordinary mortals decreases the amount of respect paid to them in comparison with other spirits. A man may match his wits with an epo with a good chance of emerging the winner. As illustrated in Myths 7 and 8, men may sometimes play very uncomfortable tricks upon them. Thus the epos are the clowns of the Carib pantheon, spirits with whom men may carry on a good-natured, though serious, competition in the bush.

Certain other supernatural forces remain to be discussed later under the head of magic.

775 **Ghosts and Death Customs.** In addition to the spirits described above, which lead an independent existence, a second class of supernatural beings is concerned to a certain degree in the affairs of mortal men, namely the ghosts of human beings.

764 322 When an individual has died the body is dressed in the person's best raiment and ornaments. A coffin is made of wood. Informants agree that the use of a wooden coffin is an ancient custom and that it has not been introduced by missionaries or other outsiders.[1] The coffin is most often made of upaiya wood (unidentified). [824] Some informants say that upaiya wood is used exclusively for this purpose, and that coffins are made of no other. Others say that any wood or an old korial may be used. In cases where the coffin is made especially for the purpose, that is, when an old korial is not used, it is made of a tree trunk hollowed by the same process used in making a korial or a cassiri barrel. It is provided with a lid of wood, and the inside is lined with fresh leaves. A grave three to four feet deep is dug in the floor of the house occupied by the deceased (grave: munano). 764 Burial takes place usually within twenty-four hours after death, although in some cases it is postponed until the second day. In former times, it is said, the sur-

[1] Two negro prospectors who died during my stay in the area were buried in shallow graves without coffins.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9-Carib SR9

764 viving members of the family would sing and dance at the grave during the entire night after the burial, but there seem to be few observances of this kind nowadays. The only earthly possessions buried with the deceased are clothing and bodily ornaments. Bows, arrows, pottery, and so forth, are not buried with the dead, but are distributed among the relatives, sons taking precedence.

768 The house of the deceased, in the floor of which the grave has been made, is deserted within two to three weeks following burial. The immediate clearing in which the house is located is also usually deserted. However, if the house is located in the midst of a cassava field, there is no restriction preventing the relatives from returning to gather cassava when needed.

765 The mourners, including all the relatives of the deceased who are present, weep to show their grief. The chief mourner (the spouse or closest relative of the dead) refrains from work "until the sad thoughts pass away." The mourners, however, do not mutilate themselves, smear themselves with ashes or other unusual substances, don a special costume, nor assume other formal marks of mourning.

A fire is kept burning in the house for a moon after the burial, so that the ghost of the dead, lurking about the grave, will be provided with warmth at night. Food is also regularly left in the house for the ghost. Food offerings of this sort are frequently discovered to have completely disappeared the next morning when the mourners visit the grave. Actually, the disappearance is doubtless due to the depredations of insects and animals, but it is regarded by the natives as a sign that the ghost has been hungry and made a good meal. Strictly speaking, food and fire are supposed to be kept in the house until it falls down, because theoretically the ghost lives in its former dwelling until it is no longer habitable. But in actual practice, it is said that the attentions to the grave seldom continue for more than a month or so. The social [152] motivations for grave offerings and for display of grief on the part of the chief mourner seem to be at least as strong as the religious. If a man, for instance, fails to follow the observances of mourning for a deceased wife, the latter's relatives will be angry with him and will accuse him of having killed her.

If it is believed that the deceased has met death at the hands of kanaimas, precautions are taken, as described in our section on

*177 a population of 114 and Baramita sixty-nine. These two settlements
361 also have mobile residents who have access to farms in still more
162 remote areas. The latter include thirty-five inhabitants.[10] In
[161] total, there were 551 Carib people in the Upper Barama River area in 1971.

*177 Increasingly, the practice of abandoning a house site in the case
768 of a death is being neglected. A cemetery some distance away is
[764] being used at the Air Strip. Several older graves around house sites are disregarded. Apparently, priorities of location override this tradition.

*177 Figure 11 shows the current settlement pattern. Both zone a and
361 b have permanent residents. Zone c residents also make use of farms in either zone a or b. There is little direct movement between zone a and b. The partial centralization of population initiated by the local mining economy has been completed. Within the existing nucleation, the center has been changed from the mine to the air strip. The remaining population has been drawn into this locus. In contrast to the limited opportunities available at the mine, some of the
[257] opportunities at the Air Strip are public. That is, they are avail-
[464] able to all Caribs. These new resources are the clinic, the school, and agricultural assistance. However, very few employment opportuni-
[241] ties are available at Baramita Air Strip. Bush farms must be maintained and returned to in the case of the permanent workers who had left aside subsistence in the rain forest.

Consequently, a pattern of dual residence appears to be emerging in response to resource development. The local Carib population has

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 52]